



*in your community*

Profiles from Quality Health Care

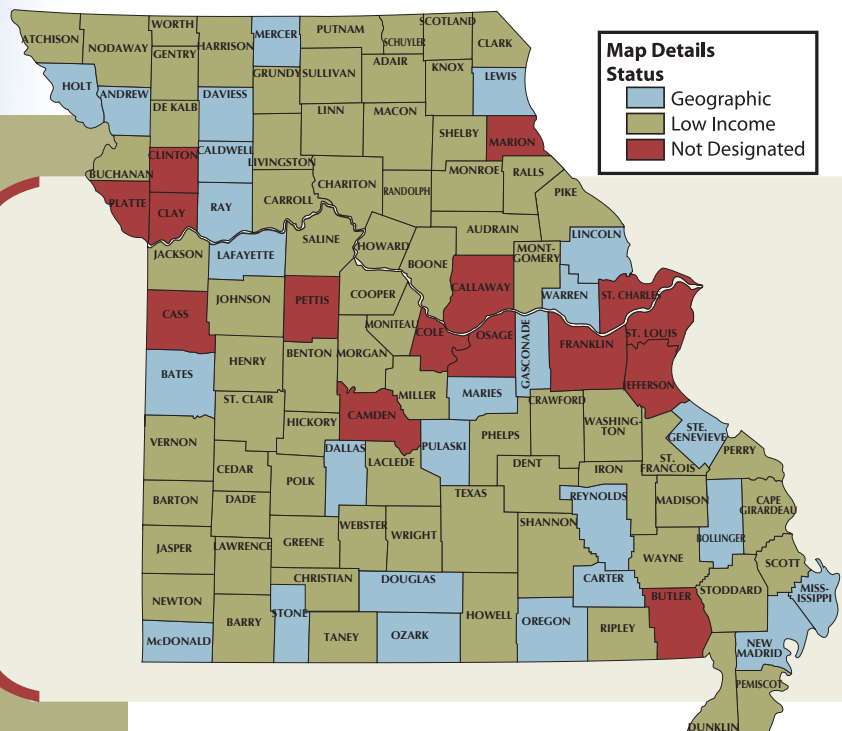


## Missouri's Underserved

Many urban and rural areas of Missouri have been determined to be medically underserved. This determination is based upon the income of the population and the ratio of physicians, dentists and behavioral health clinicians to the total population. The Primary Care Resource Initiative for Missouri (PRIMO) provides funding to improve the quality of health care in these areas by creating new or expanding community-based health care delivery systems. Many of these health care delivery systems are eligible employment sites for recipients of PRIMO, Missouri Professional and Practical Nursing Student Loan Program, State Loan Repayment Program, and the National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program.

PRIMO provides forgivable loans for students pursuing careers in primary health care fields in exchange for services in these underserved areas. The State Loan Repayment program provides financial assistance to repay educational debt in exchange for medical, dental, behavioral health, or nursing services in these underserved areas. These programs are designed to increase the number of health care professionals serving in these areas of need while providing assistance to individuals who may otherwise be unable to afford the educational costs in pursuing a degree in the medical field.

*This map shows the designated areas of need in Missouri.*



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# Promoting PRIMO Professionals

Each month PRIMO highlights an individual who has received PRIMO funding and is currently providing primary care in an underserved area in Missouri. The following interview segments are with two such individuals.

**Dr. Kim Hartel** grew up in Potosi, Missouri. She credits her high school counselor with helping her take the path toward a career in medicine with PRIMO. Dr. Hartel now works for Ladies First OB/GYN in Farmington.



**How has PRIMO been a benefit to your career?**

PRIMO has helped a lot, giving me connections to other rural physicians in the area and helping set up rotations as well as money to help with medical school. Medical school is extremely expensive, especially coming from a rural area.

**What benefits do you feel PRIMO scholars provide to the communities they serve?**

The PRIMO physicians that come back to rural areas to practice serve a huge community of patients. These health care providers increase access to medical and dental care.

**Will you stay in a rural area?**

Oh definitely. I can't see myself practicing anywhere else. I plan on putting down roots here in Farmington and continuing to live here the rest of my life.

**Dr. Rendi Pfannenstiel** grew up in Lockwood, Missouri.

She attended the University of Missouri at Kansas City. She now practices general dentistry for Jordan Valley Community Health Center's mobile unit in Springfield. Dr. Pfannenstiel says she enjoys being able to provide a positive dental experience for children who are often scared and in pain. She says seeing them walk out smiling and happy is very rewarding.

**How did PRIMO influence your career path?**

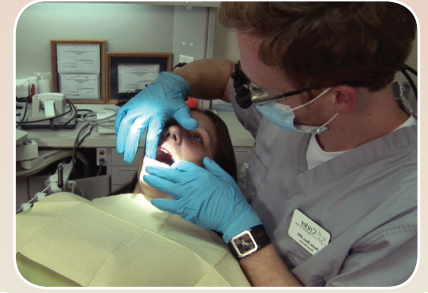
It definitely made me look more into public health. When I learned of this program and its opportunities, I started to volunteer on the Ronald McDonald Tooth Truck and discovered this is exactly what I wanted to do. Jordan Valley actually has a mobile dental unit which is what I strived for and where I now work.

**What impact does PRIMO have on rural communities?**

It has a huge impact on those communities because we're offering help to people who otherwise wouldn't necessarily get it. To be able to go back to those communities that need help is really important.

**What reaction do you get from children who get treatment from the mobile unit?**

They will come here in pain and walk out smiling and happy.



"I had been to other dentists before and they were always really rough with my teeth. But Dr. Mace is not just here to do his job. He actually cares about his patients and their teeth," explained Talisha.



**Christina**  
Crider Health Center Client

# Restoring Smiles, Restoring Hope

*Many people take good dental health for granted, but for those who are underinsured or uninsured, dental services are not easily available.*

As a result, many of these people live with chronic dental problems that can affect their overall health and well-being. In addition to health problems, poor dental care can also be a source of social embarrassment for those with visible problems.

PRIMO funding allows Crider Health Center to provide much needed dental services to the underinsured, uninsured and those receiving Medicaid. One family who recently relocated to St. Charles County from Texas has had hope restored because of dental services provided to them by Crider.

“We had just moved up from Texas, and we didn’t have any insurance,” said Christina. “My kids needed dental work done. I needed teeth pulled.”

Dr. Dustin Mace, a previous State Loan recipient, who now works as a dentist for Crider Health Center, extracted several of Christina’s teeth at a reduced cost. He then referred her to a specialist who could complete upper and lower dentures for her, restoring her chewing function as well as her smile.

“My daughter had braces for two and a half years that had not been taken care of,” said Christina. As a result of the lack of orthodontic maintenance, her daughter, Talisha, was in a great deal of pain from having brackets left on her teeth. Crider was able to refer her to a local orthodontist who was able to remove the brackets at no charge to the family. Later, Dr. Mace was able to restore parts of her teeth that had decayed, increasing Talisha’s self-esteem by giving her ability to smile without being embarrassed.

“I had been to other dentists before and they were always really rough with my teeth. But Dr. Mace is not just here to do his job. He actually cares about his patients and their teeth,” explained Talisha.

Because of PRIMO, Crider was able to employ Dr. Mace and the dental program at Crider Health Center was able to treat 1,210 patients last year, including 505 adults and 705 children. These individuals would not otherwise have access to dental services because of their financial situation.

In addition, PRIMO funding has helped Crider provide a dental sealant program in Franklin County. Crider Health Center developed a school-based dental sealant program for a large number of high-risk children with susceptible permanent molar teeth. The program intends to treat more than 4,750 children in all ten Franklin County school districts. In addition to the dental sealant, the children participate in an educational program to learn skills for better oral health. The benefit of treating children within the schools is that there is no risk of appointment cancellation and no additional transportation or expense required of the parents. So far, the program has treated students in five of the school districts, and plans to treat additional school districts this Spring.



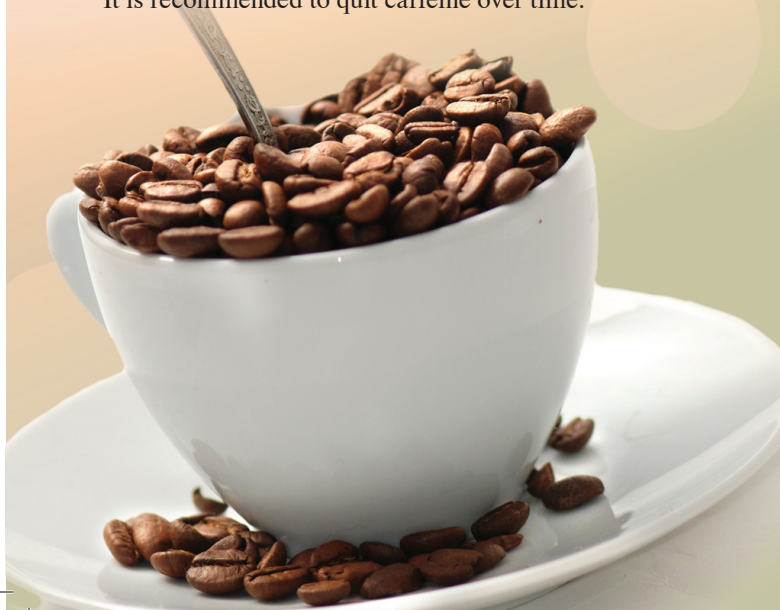
# Caffeine Quiz



*March is National Caffeine Awareness Month. Take this quiz to find out how much you know about this stimulant.*

1. True or False: caffeine is an addictive drug?
2. True or False: Appetite suppressants, cold medicines and pain relievers do not contain caffeine?
3. True or False: Physicians recommend children do not consume caffeine because it can suppress the appetite leaving them less likely to eat nutritious foods?
4. True or False: All of the following symptoms can be caused by too much caffeine intake: Increased heart rate, nausea, vomiting, heartburn, dehydration, anxiety, depression, difficulty sleeping, and tremors?
5. True or False: Quitting caffeine suddenly is unlikely to cause withdrawal symptoms?

**Answers:** 1. True 2. False, many do. 3. True. 4. True. 5. False. Withdrawal symptoms can include headaches, irritability and nausea among other symptoms. It is recommended to quit caffeine over time.



Learn more about **PRIMO** at the following websites:

[www.dhss.mo.gov/PRIMO](http://www.dhss.mo.gov/PRIMO)

[www.primopros.com](http://www.primopros.com)

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